

America's Enduring Interests in Europe

Vital U.S. Interests in Europe

Political and Security Interests

The United States has vital interests in a Europe that is democratic, undivided, stable and prosperous, open to trade and investment opportunities, and supportive of political, economic, and military cooperation with the United States in Europe and other important parts of the world. Transatlantic cooperation is the key not only to advancing our mutual interests in Europe, but also to solving global problems. The United States and its NATO allies play leading roles in the major institutions and in developing the tools needed to shape the international community; constituting three of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, six of the seven G-7 group of major industrialized states, and the majority of the board members of the International Monetary Fund. Our transatlantic allies are major international aid and developmental assistance donors throughout the world. U.S. leadership on European security issues not only shapes our own and allied views toward consensus on the major defense issues, it also facilitates cooperation and gives the United States leverage in other important forums.

Because of their level of technological achievement, their solid democratic systems, their military competence, their wealth, and other enduring factors, our European allies will perforce play important roles in addressing the risks to U.S. security and well-being. Moreover, the collapse of totalitarianism and the commitment to build democratic political institutions and free

market economies by Europe's former communist states represent a historical opportunity to expand the circle of states that see it in their interest to cooperate in the pursuit of common goals. If the reform process is successful, the importance of Europe as a partner in meeting the world's problems will increase still further.

For these reasons, the United States will continue to have a great stake in maintaining influence in the decisions and policies of Europe's governments and multinational organizations. NATO in particular, the institutional embodiment of the transatlantic partnership, has been the key element in maintaining general peace in Europe for more than 45 years, an achievement unparalleled by any other international organization. Critical to America's interests in the region is maintaining the viability and vitality of NATO as an institution which is able to deter and defend against any attacks on its members. At the core of NATO's success is the integrated military command structure, through which the forces of the Alliance cooperate, train, and plan together for the common defense.

Economic Interests

An often ignored facet of Europe's importance to U.S. national security is the tremendous economic benefits Americans receive from our cooperative relationship with this prosperous and dynamic region. Inside the "zone of stability" defended by NATO, the United States and its allies have developed strong economic ties that have been of great mutual profit. These ties generate jobs for American workers, quality

goods for American consumers, and investments and profits for American businesses.

America's military presence in Europe and the defense contributions of our allies are the prerequisites for the stable security environment that nurtures these economic benefits. By pursuing a policy that shares responsibility for defending our mutual interests with our transatlantic allies,

Economic Importance of Europe

- Nearly 3 million Americans are employed in the United States by European-owned firms, and 1.5 million American workers are supported by U.S. exports to Europe.
- About 50% of U.S. direct investment abroad is in Europe, and over 60% of foreign direct investment in the United States is from Europe.
- Europe has more of the Gross World Product than any other region—in 1992, 35% at market exchange rates and 27% at purchasing power parity exchange rates.
- Europe was the United States' second-largest customer in 1993, taking 31% of U.S. exports of goods and services, exceeded only by Asia with 33%.
- Europe was the United States' second-largest supplier in 1993, providing 29% of U.S. imports of goods and services, exceeded only by Asia with 41%.
- Europe provides the United States with relatively balanced trade, with only a \$7 billion U.S. merchandise trade deficit in 1993, compared to \$115 billion for Asia.

Source: *Strategic Assessment 1995* by INSS

America reduces its own defense costs and increases the security of its vital economic interests.

Expanding the "zone of stability" will not only decrease the threat of instability damaging our economic interests in Europe, but will also increase the value of those interests as the development of new markets provides new trade and investment opportunities for Americans. The result of such prudent security investments in Central and Eastern Europe is likely to parallel the economic benefits we derive from our 40-year security relationship with our NATO allies: increasing employment opportunities, expanded selection of products, and profitable investments and exports.

Social and Cultural Interests

The majority of Americans claim European ancestry or ethnic origin. In the 1990 U.S. Census 249 million people were counted:

U.S. Population Claiming Sole or Primary European Ancestry or Ethnic Origin

	Millions	Percent
German	45.6	18.3
Irish	22.7	9.0
English	22.7	9.0
Italian	11.3	4.5
Polish	6.5	2.6
French	6.2	2.5
Scot-Irish	4.3	1.7
Dutch	3.5	1.4
Scottish	3.3	1.3
Swedish	2.9	1.2
Norwegian	2.5	1.0
Welsh	1.0	0.4
Other Western European	5.1	2.1
Former Yugoslavia	0.8	0.3
3 Baltic States	0.6	0.2
Other Eastern European	3.5	1.4
TOTALS	142.5	56.9

Source: U.S. Census, 1990

143 million of these—87% of those indicating specific foreign ancestries and 57% of the total population—indicated European ancestry.

Moreover, there are myriad of deep historical and political-philosophical ties between the United States and Europe. America's relationship with Europe and the mutual security interests the United States defends with its allies are thus of fundamental importance to the American public.

Fundamental Objectives

At the most basic level, our national objectives are to secure for Americans their lives and personal safety; their values, freedoms, and institutions; and their prosperity. The surest approach to securing these basic goals is for the United States and the free nations of Europe to preserve, adapt, and extend current mechanisms for policy coordination and cooperation, thus laying an ever stronger basis for the pursuit of common ends.

Given the great importance of Europe to the United States, there are certain objectives which take on overarching importance to this nation in its relations with the nations of Europe and which shape our strategy toward them:

- Continuing adherence by our allies to democratic principles, preventing the renationalization of foreign and defense policies, strengthening constructive economic relations vital to our prosperity, and maintaining a close and cooperative security relationship for addressing global problems;

- Deterring and defending against threats to the territory of NATO members;
- Assisting the consolidation of democratic and market reforms in the East and helping to promote stability by engaging the new European democracies in a growing network of security relationships, both bilateral and multilateral;
- Preventing the global proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in active cooperation with Canada and Europe's technologically advanced states;
- Deterring the spread of instability in Europe, especially in some Balkan and former Soviet states where the end of communism has led to the reopening of old wounds;
- Developing effective capabilities to contain and resolve regional conflicts, including military capabilities for peacekeeping and peace enforcement; and
- Preserving and enhancing the effectiveness of European security organizations, especially NATO, as the principal vehicle for continued United States leadership and influence on European security issues.



DoD Photo by Ward

Secretary of Defense William J. Perry attending the Informal Meeting of NATO Defense Ministers in Seville, September 29, 1994.